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TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

MEETING DATE February 7, 1984

DATE February 2, 1984 REPORT NO. 6

SUBJECT MTC REPORT - INTER-REGIONAL TRANSIT CO-ORDINATION - AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Source: TTC
Agenda Item # 6
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Municipal Reference

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission:

1) Endorse, in principle, the consultant's recommendations in the above referenced MTC Study with the provisos as mentioned in the "discussion" portion following.

2) Appoint the Chief General Manager as the TTC representative on the recommended "Transit Forum".

3) Restate a request to the Ministry of Transportation and Communications that MTC review guidelines for its relationship with GO Transit such that GO Transit is seen to be operating more independently from MTC.

4) Forward this report and recommendations to the Deputy Minister of MTC with copies to representatives of the 13 transit properties in the study area.

(A.H.S.) (J.P.)

BACKGROUND

As related in a September 14, 1983 report to the Commission, the Ministry of Transportation and Communications had commissioned a consultant to conduct a study on inter-regional transit co-ordination in the greater Toronto area. The September 14 Commission Report provided a TTC perspective on an interim discussion paper from the MTC Study entitled "Inter-regional Transit Co-ordination - A Working Paper". That paper outlined a variety of inter-regional transit issues and provided several organizational options which might lead to improved co-ordination and solutions to current and future inter-regional transit issues.

Under cover of a January 19, 1984 letter from Mr. H.F. Gilbert, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, the Commission has new received

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copies of the final consultant's report and recommendations on the inter-regional study entitled "Inter-regional Transit Co-ordination - An Implementation Plan". Mr. Gilbert has requested that a formal response to the implementation plan be forwarded to him by March 21, 1984.

DISCUSSION

Main Thrust of Report

The consultant's report to MTC contains 20 recommendations, but the main thrust of the report is contained in the following 2 recommendations:

"1) The Ministry of Transportation and Communications should assume responsibility for inter-regional transit co-ordination in the area comprising Metropolitan Toronto and the Regions of Peel, York and Durham."

and

"10) An informal advisory Transit Forum should be established with no powers of its own. The Forum would provide a convenient means for sharing information and exchanging views, and should help develop consensus on transit issues, but it would leave final decisions to the individual transit systems, their municipalities and MTC."

The informal "Transit Forum" on inter-regional issues would be made up of a senior representative from each of the 13 transit systems in the study area and would be chaired by a full time "Transit Co-ordinator" to be employed by MTC.

In principle, we are in agreement with these main recommendations from the study and have made similar recommendations in various reports over the past several years including the Long Range Plan and the more recent September 14, 1983 report to the Commission.

However, while we agree in principle, there are two potential areas of concern which were expressed in our previous September 14, 1983 report and require repeating

since they have not been totally addressed in the consultant's report.

MTC Vis A Vis the "Transit Forum"

The first concern hinges upon what might be categorized as a potential difference in emphasis with respect to the role of MTC vis a vis the Transit Forum. While we agree that MTC should play a lead role in co-ordination of inter-regional transit issues, we see that role being mainly that of a catalyst to bring the appropriate transit operators together so that they can collectively discuss and recommend solutions to identified issues. Any study or research to be done would be decided upon by the Transit Forum (including MTC). While the consultant's report recommends that "MTC and the transit operators concerned should adopt an ambitious yet attainable work program ..." it also says that one of the roles of MTC would be "... objective research to determine what needs to be done and how best to do it ...". In order for the transit forum and co-ordination of inter-regional issues to be successful, the transit operators, in conjunction with MTC, must be fully involved in deciding what needs to be done and carrying out the necessary study or research. This is in contrast to the current provincial practice of carrying out many studies on transit issues with the major operator involvement occurring at or near the end of the study.

In a similar vein, the consultant suggests that MTC should adopt a specific set of goals and objectives for co-ordination, in consultation with the transit operators. Again, it is only a difference in emphasis but we would suggest that goals and objectives should be adopted by the Transit Forum which is a partnership of the operators and MTC.

With this change of emphasis, we would recommend that the staffing of the "co-ordinator" function at MTC be kept to a bare minimum since he/she will be able to call on existing staff resources from both MTC and the 13 transit operators.

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MTC as an Impartial Mediator

The second area of concern lies with the perceived degree of impartiality that MTC as co-ordinator and mediator might be able to impart with respect to any issues involving GO Transit. As in our September 14, 1983 report, we would continue to recommend that GO Transit be allowed to operate more independently from MTC and under financial controls similar to those of the municipal operators so that:

a) there would be more consistent area-wide transit policies; and,

b) MTC would be perceived as a more unbiased mediator on inter-regional transit issues.

Other Issues

Goals and Objectives - Wording (Rec. 2)

While the general thrust of the consultant's recommended goals and objectives can be endorsed, the specific wording will have to be discussed at the first meeting of the Transit Forum.

Subsidy Policy (Rec. 5)

The consultant has recommended that MTC "undertake a study to determine how subsidies can best be used as incentives for transit co-ordination in the study area and to review the equity of overall subsidy policy, particularly in relation to regional and inter-regional transit services".

This recommendation should be strongly endorsed as it is acknowledgement of a similar TTC recommendation from the previous September 14, 1983 Commission Report.

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Sub-Committees (Rec. 16)

Staff assistants from the transit properties or MTC should be eligible for appointment as sub-committee members but the approval should be up to the Transit Forum and not just the Chairman as indicated in the consultant's report.